

642. l. 2  
6

THE  
SPECTACLES.  
A  
TALE.

From the *French* of  
Monf. de la FONTAINE.

---

*Vah! callidum consilium.*

TERENCE.

---



---

L O N D O N :

Printed for ABRAHAM GÖRINGE, in *May's Buildings*. 1753.

[Price Six-Pence.]



THE  
SPECTACLES

A  
T  
A  
L  
E

FROM THE LIBRARY OF

THE  
MUSEUM

41

11

1

121





# THE SPECTACLES.

**I**N Days of Yore, as Authors say,  
 There liv'd a Spark, for am'rous Play  
 By Nature form'd, and well I ween,  
 He beardless was, and scarce fifteen,  
 Which for his Purpose suited well,  
 As presently I mean to tell.  
 With Nuns well-stock'd a convent stood,  
 Just *a propos*, i'th' Neighbourhood;  
 He oft' had view'd with longing Eye,  
 The holy Maids as he pass'd by,  
 Wou'd sometimes stop, and at the grate  
 To steal a look, whole hours wait,



At length with dull attendance tir'd,  
 With want of consummation fir'd,  
 To gain his point, at once he ventur'd,  
 And in disguise the *Convent* enter'd :  
 The *Abbess* took him for a Maid,  
*Coletta*, was his Name, he said,  
 And then with rev'rence due he kiss'd her,  
 As might become a holy Sister.  
 Long had he not been there I trust,  
 O ! dire disgrace ! but out it must,  
 'Ere Sister *Agnes* had been playing,  
 'Twere better far she'd minded praying,  
 But so it prov'd, and by it got,  
 Perhaps the grave may ask me what ?  
 And tell me, that I shou'd have said,  
 A woful Chance befel the Maid,  
 For *Agnes* ever counted chaste,  
 Grew wond'rous round about the waist ;

And



And in due time, as it is said,  
 Of a young thing was brought to Bed.  
 The holy Sisters in amaze,  
 Did at it, as a wonder gaze.  
 As well they might, nor cou'd suppose,  
 From earth, as Mushrooms do, it rose,  
 Or *Manna* like, from heaven fell,  
 Such miracles, they knew full well  
 Were long time ceas'd, (tho' as they say,  
 Their *Priests* work wonders to this day,)  
 So all determin'd *Nemine Con*,  
 It never cou'd come there alone,  
 Besides, if I may speak the truth,  
 It much resembled this our Youth.  
 The *Abbeys* in a mighty passion,  
 For scolding then too was in fashion,  
 Vow'd vengeance on the miscreant base,  
 Who thus had scandaliz'd the place,

And



And then for fundry, weighty reasons,  
 Poor Sister *Agnes* she imprisons;  
 Next how to find the Father out,  
 Began to make a mighty rout,  
 The House was guarded with such care,  
 The walls so high, no entrance there,  
 The Nun, who kept the Tour,\* was old,  
 And proof against the pow'r of gold.  
 These things premis'd, how it cou'd be  
 She wond'ered much, tho' certainly  
 A man there must be in disguise,  
 The which he wore to 'scape surprize,  
 Therefore at once the truth to have  
 She to the Nuns this Order gave;  
 " Strip every maid to find this dragon,  
 " Let not a Sister have a rag on:  
 How this command perplex'd our youth,  
 Fearing thereby the *naked* truth

\* The Tour in the *French* Nunneries is the turning box where provisions and other necessaries are taken in.



Must be found out, you all may guess,  
 The more he rack'd his brains, the less  
 He thought it possible that He,  
 Shou'd e'er escape the place *Scot* free;  
 Until at length necessity,  
 The mother of invention she,  
 Assisted him with a device,  
 To 'scape this scrutiny so nice,  
 And get clear off, it was to tye---  
 But gentle Reader, how shall I  
 My meaning modestly express,  
 In words so clear that you may guess,  
 At what he ty'd, nor be mistaken,  
 How he contriv'd to save his bacon:  
 'Twill be no easy task I fear,  
 But faith I'll try, so take it here.

Once on a time as it is said,  
 Our bodies all were open made,

And



And so contriv'd that easily,  
 Whoever had a mind, might see  
 The various things that each contain'd,  
 Whose heart was with dishonour stain'd  
 Or with deceit and flattery drest,  
 For all was then so clear exprest,  
 One might discern with half an eye,  
 If any dar'd to couch a lye,  
 And better had it been if still,  
 By fates inexorable will,  
 Our breasts thus open had remain'd,  
 Then friendship ne'er had been prophan'd,  
 But every falsehood clear display'd,  
 In whatsoever heart it had laid;  
 Physicians too would find their end,  
 It surely wou'd their judgment mend,  
 As then they'd easily perceive,  
 What they were summon'd to relieve,

And

And



And not as now like blindmen grope,  
 Leaving their Patients void of hope,  
 First one they poison, then another,  
 Resolv'd their want of skill to smother,  
 Had men but windows in their breast,  
 They'd stand some better chance at least,  
 As they cou'd not so often fail,  
 In their attempts, but to my tale.  
 The Females being most expos'd,  
 Begg'd that this op'ning might be clos'd,  
 Complaining that it was so wide,  
 They for their souls cou'd nothing hide.  
 Dame nature then our common mother.  
 Contriv'd a way to end this pother,  
 To both the Sexes she bestow'd  
 A lace, with which, these gaps they sow'd,  
 The women theirs too thick did stitch,  
 And at the bottom left a nitch :



The men were also in the wrong,  
 For they the stitches made too long,  
 And did not all the thong expend,  
 But left a piece at nether end.  
 Now this is what the youth did tie,  
 The reason you may guess, for why,  
 By this device all seem'd so flat,  
 There was no sign of you know what;  
 But sure the thread had ne'er been able,  
 (Were it compar'd in strength to cable,)  
 To keep confin'd that bo'istrous part,  
 Some how or other it must start,  
 Had Saints, nay Angels, too been there,  
 The case had been the same I fear,  
 When to full view each lov'ly maid,  
 Stood in her birth-day suit array'd,  
 With beauteous shape and graceful mein,  
 As those who wait on *Cyprian* Queen.



The *Abbeſs* on her noſe did wear  
 Of SPECTACLES, a weighty pair,  
 For being old, they ſerv'd her now  
 To ſearch the matter thro' and thro',  
 Surrounded by her twenty Nuns  
 Whoſe ſwelling breſts, like new croſs buns,  
 Or bladders blown by dint of wind  
 Luxuriant roſe, and you wou'd find,  
 On them in fact, was trial made,  
 A pea wou'd dance as on drum-head,  
 This put our youth upon the rack,  
 For fear the ſtrait-ty'd ſtrings ſhould crack,  
 And ſo they did, for at one bounce  
 Away it flew with mighty flounce,  
 As when a fiery ſteed diſdains  
 To bear the yoke, and ſcorns the reins;  
 When once got looſe, upright it roſe,  
 And ſtruck the *Abbeſs* on the noſe,



The SPECTACLES to th' ceiling threw;  
 And nigh o'eturn'd the bearer too;  
 Who you may think enrag'd at this  
 A council calls, wherein it is  
 After debate by all agreed,  
 With flogging this our youth must bleed.--  
 This said, they seiz'd the luckless wight,  
 And 'gan to exercise their spite;  
 They ty'd him to a tree that grew,  
 Within the yard, of mournful yew.  
 Then went to search with indignation,  
 For instruments of flagellation.  
 But fortune, who the boldest favours  
 Blasted at once their curst endeavours,  
 A lusty *Miller*, on a Mule,  
 Came riding in, they say no fool.  
 Cou'd play at coits, and cudgel well,  
 Would kifs a girl, but never tell.

“ Heyday !



" Heyday ! Says he, What have we here ?

" A wond'rous pretty Saint I swear,

" But say young man, I long to know,

" Which of the Sisters serv'd you so ?

" Sure with the Nuns you've been at play,

" And for it suffer thus to day,

" For if there's ought in strength of back,

" I judge you well a Nun can crack ;

The youth reply'd in mighty dudgeon,

Thinking that now he'd catch'd a gudgeon,

" My friend, you quite mistake, the case

" For which I suffer this disgrace,

" Had I with their request comply'd,

" I never now had thus been ty'd,

" Besides a whipping too I fear,

" For being chaste, 'tis hard I swear,

" Tho' must submit howe'er it be,

" I can't give up my chastity.

The



The MILLER straitway in surprize,  
 Laughing, the fast bound cords unties,  
 And to the youth address'd this speech,  
 " Poor, scrup'lous fool, I'll save thy breech,  
 " You'd cut no figure in this place,  
 " Were but our parson in such case,  
 " He'd ne'er behave, as thou hast done,  
 " Quick tye me to the tree and run;  
 " You're ignorant I plainly see,  
 " And not for business fit like me,  
 " Let all the Sisters come I warrant,  
 " They sha'nt return without their errand,  
 The youth not wanting better sport,  
 Soon ty'd him fast, and scamper'd for't,  
 The *Miller* now stark naked stood,  
 In waiting for the Sisterhood,  
 When soon of Nuns, at least a score,  
 Who *rods*, instead of tapers bore,



In order came, and one and all,  
 Did presently to jerking fall ;  
 While he provok'd, as well he might,  
 Cry'd, " Softly ladies, by this light,  
 " You're in the wrong, I'm not that booby,  
 " But for the sport as fit as you be.  
 " You'll wonders see, if you'll but try,  
 " Cut both my ears off if I lye.  
 " I am a devil at that fame,  
 " You apprehend me,---gues the name.  
 " But in this scourging on my foul,  
 " A novice quite,---an arrant fool.  
 " A fool, a toothless virgin cries,  
 " If that's the case, we'll make you wife,  
 " Are you not father of that brat,  
 " For him you'll pay, before of that :  
 And then to whipping fell again,  
 The *Miller* bellow'd out amain ;

Fearing



Fearing he was not understood,

" Ladies, I'll---kiss you all by G---d

" All I will do that's in my pow'r,

" For heav'n's sake give your scourging o'er,

The more the *Miller* crack'd his jokes,

The more the *Fiends* renew'd their strokes,

And flogg'd him with such dextrous skill,

He, if alive, remembers't still,

While thus he underwent this whipping,

His Mule upon the grafs was skipping;

I care not what became of both,

It is enough, he sav'd my *youth*,

You reader, too wou'd not have been,

For twelve such beauties in his skin.

F I N I S.





